



TOXICS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

NEWSLETTER

Winter - Spring 2007

VICTORY! Governor Spitzer's Pollution Prevention Institute Approved

The Governor proposed to use \$2 million of Environmental Protection Fund monies in his 2007-08 budget request to create a Pollution Prevention Institute to work with businesses to reduce the use and production of toxic materials. Following negotiations going on until the wee hours on April 2, the the NYS Senate, Assembly, and the Governor all agreed to fund the Pollution Prevention institute. Last September, CEC and the Alliance for a Toxic-Free Future made the Pollution Prevention Institute a 2007 policy priority. CEC and our partners worked furiously over the autumn and winter to research, explain, justify, and advocate for the Institute. We are thrilled to have such great early returns on our work.

CEC held meetings with Toxic Use Reduction Institute (TURI) leadership in Massachusetts, in order to incorporate part of their model and learn from their experiences on how to develop a successful program. TURI resulted in a forty two percent (42%) reduction in the use of hazardous substances and a sixty five percent (65%) reduction in the generation of hazardous waste (per unit of production) from 1990 to 2004, with an estimated fourteen million dollar overall cost savings for participating businesses over a seven year period. We anticipate even greater results for New York.

The Pollution Prevention Institute (PPI) should reduce the use of toxic and radioactive substances by promoting sustainable environmental management practices, comprehensive pollution prevention (P2), and green chemis-

try. The Institute should provide technical assistance, research and development, demonstration, technology transfer, training, education, and information dissemination to help New York State businesses. It will likely become the central P2 information clearinghouse in the state, and also train and certify Pollution Prevention Planners. These planners will fan out across the state helping manufacturers and others develop competitive, twenty-first century products and processes.

The Pollution Prevention Institute will likely be affiliated with one or more public or private universities in the state. The site will be chosen through an open request for proposals process to begin perhaps as soon as this summer. The PPI will be overseen by the Department of Environmental Conservation, whose new Commissioner, former Assemblyman Pete Grannis, was just confirmed.

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CEC Websites

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www.toxicfreefuture.org

Mission Statement

Citizens' Environmental Coalition is a statewide grassroots environmental organization working to eliminate pollution in New York State through our Community Assistance Program and statewide Advocacy Campaigns. Our mission is to:

- ❖ Create safe, healthy communities, schools and workplaces through pollution prevention;
- ❖ Empower, educate and assist people concerned about environmental problems;
- ❖ Strengthen the connection from the grassroots to the statehouse and build effective coalitions;
- ❖ Promote democratic, grassroots advocacy to restore New York's environment; and
- ❖ Promote corporate accountability and non-violent social justice values.

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.
– Margaret Mead.

Volunteers Appreciated

Want to help the environment? Have free time on your hands? *We would love your help!* From **web work** to **updating our database** or **working on issues**, CEC welcomes volunteers of all interests.



Please contact the Albany office at (518) 462-5527 ext. 20 or cectoxic@igc.org or Dan in Buffalo at (716) 885-6848 or dan@cectoxic.org

**Want to be a part of the next newsletter?
email suggestions and content to
cectoxic@igc.org**

Comings and Goings

CEC bids bon voyage to long time staffers Kathleen Curtis and Roberta Chase Wilding. Kathy left CEC in August to work with the national Healthy Building Network. Bobbi left CEC in September to work with the local Haywood Burns Environmental Education Center. We thank them both for their years of service, and wish them the best of luck in their new endeavors.

Following the departure of Bobbi and Kathy, CEC was fortunate enough to persuade Mark Dunlea, Esq., to serve as Senior Advisor while we searched for new leadership. Mark served for many years as Executive Director of Hunger Action Network of New York State, and as a leader of the New York State Green Party. Mark did a fabulous job of keeping us on track, improving office procedures, writing grant reports and press releases, and otherwise ably managing the organization during the several month leadership transition. He's now back at Hunger Action working on universal single payer health care and other worthy projects out of their Albany office.

Other staff departures over this past fall and winter include Albany Program Associate Karl Breyman, Albany Canvass Director Christian Werwaiss, Albany Office Manager Matt Yaeger, Buffalo Environmental Associate Brian Hillery, Buffalo Program Associate Lindsay Marlow, and Buffalo Office Manager Kailey Cartwright. Karl served as the 2006 Coordinator of the Alliance for a Toxic Free Future. He's now studying Arabic. Christian Werwaiss moved to the Washington DC area. Matt Yaeger returned to UAlbany to complete his Master's degree in Sociology. Brian—responsible for CEC's West Valley remediation project—also headed for graduate school. Lindsay helped organize last year's successful Environmental Justice for All Tour, and is taking NYS civil service exams. Kailey was the glue that held our Western New York operation together, and now works in the hospitality industry.

The big shoes left by the departures have been filled by Steve Breyman, Trix Niernberger, Rob Attardo, Dimple Patel, and Sarah Parks in Albany, and by Dan Galvin and Caitlin Littlefield in Buffalo. Executive Director Breyman

is on sabbatical from his professorship at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. Trix Niernberger is Assistant Director. Trix brings twenty-five years of nonprofit management experience to her job of ordering our finances, writing inquiries and grants, and overseeing our development and canvass operations. Environmental Associate Rob helps manage the office, performs research, prepares lobby visit materials, and generally keeps the lid on the Albany operation. Environmental Associate Dimple is in charge of this year's Dirty Dozen competition. Environmental Associate Sarah is working on GIS mapping of critical environmental health data. Dan Galvin runs our West Valley program, and Caitlin heads up our municipal procurement initiative.

CEC's Transition Advisory Committee (TAC) members provided crucial support and advice during our leadership transition. Members Roger Cook, Laura Haight, Anne Rabe, Barbara Warren, John Dieffenbacher-Krall, and Lois Gibbs volunteered many hours in recent months. They were joined during this exciting period by the extraordinary CEC Board of Directors. A veteran organizer remarked that he'd never before seen a Board step up during a leadership transition like the CEC Board did. Juggling their own professions and responsibilities with their many other civic commitments, Board members Tom Ellis, Kelly Travers-Main, Zac Moore, and Linda Ochs went above and beyond the call of duty. And we're happy to welcome to the Board two "new" members: Louise Poindexter from Rochester, and Anne Rabe. Anne, of course, served for eighteen years, in two separate stints, as CEC Executive Director. Prior to joining the Board at its January meeting Anne served as the Chair of the TAC. She is a central player in CEC's green procurement and pollution prevention initiatives.

Meet CEC's New Staff

Caitlin Littlefield calls Buffalo home, but has enjoyed exploring the globe and discovering all our natural world has to offer. Graduating from the University of Toronto with an Hon. B.A. in Pure Mathematics, and minors in French and Philosophy, Caitlin's interests range from voice studies to fractals, to travel, to hiking, to French cuisine. While taking a year abroad in Dunedin, New Zealand, Caitlin was introduced to the wonderful world of environmental systems analysis and restoration, where she was given the opportunity to study fractional derivatives and their applications to pollutant spread in underground water systems. After completing her degree in Toronto, she taught English for a year in primary schools in Nimes, France while planning further course work and objectives. Finally returning to her hometown after visiting 15 countries and 4 continents, Caitlin is enjoying her time at CEC focusing on green procurement, and citizen assistance.



Dan Galvin was born and raised in Buffalo, New York. In 2005 he graduated from Hamilton College, where he concentrated in philosophy and religious studies. His philosophy thesis focused on the holistic relationship between Nietzsche's writing style and the content of his thought.

After graduation, Dan took a job in Boston teaching music, cooking, and Lacrosse to 8th and 9th graders. Wanderlust eventually took hold, so he hopped a flight to



Europe to cool his heels. Several months and a dozen passport stamps later, Dan returned—a proud native son—to Buffalo. Shortly after Dan jumped at the opportunity to drive cross-country with a friend. After several months well spent jammed into a Jeep Wrangler, the trip ended in

Seattle. Dan really enjoyed New Mexico, especially the food. He still hasn't been able to bring himself to sift through all of the pictures he took during his travels.

Dan's an ardent reader and an unredeemed music addict. Much of his leisure time is spent reading, playing guitar, and listening to music. He also loves rainbows. Dan will be focusing his efforts for CEC on the West Valley campaign, continuing in the long struggle for adequate clean up of that notorious toxic site.

Dimple Patel is a student at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. She will be graduating in May of 2007 with a dual bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering and Science, Technology & Society. At RPI, her current extracurricular activities include being Social Chair for her Alpha Omega Epsilon Engineering Sorority and Webmaster of RPI's section of Society of Women Engineers. She has also been the union representative and captain of RPI's cheerleading squad. Outside of school, she enjoys yoga, playing tennis, and cooking.



She grew up in Albany, Oregon and plans to move back to the Pacific Northwest after graduation. She would like to pursue a career involving green engineering; specifically sustainable energy.

Steve Breyman is Associate Professor of Science and Technology Studies at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York, where he directs the Department's Graduate Program. He is also Director of Rensselaer's Ecological Economics, Values & Policy Program. Breyman serves as Recording Secretary of the Faculty Senate, and as faculty advisor to the Student Pugwash chapter at RPI, EcoLogic, and to the Rensselaer Pride Alliance. Breyman's latest book is *Why Movements Matter: US Arms Control Policy and the West German Peace Movement* (SUNY Press, 2001). He is currently writing about the US anti-incinerator movement, chemical security in the US, green chemistry, and chemical policy reform. He is active in struggles for peace, environmental integrity, and justice in the US and abroad. Breyman is co-founder of the Rensselaer County Greens, and the Hudson-Mohawk Independent Media Center, and hosts a weekly progressive public affairs radio show—"On the Barricades"—on WRPI FM. He is Secretary of the Governing Board of Common Cause/New York, former Co-Chair of the Board of Directors of Citizens Environmental Coalition, former Treasurer of Brunswick Smart Growth, and a former member of the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors of Environmental Advocates of New York. He currently serves as Executive Director of Citizens' Environmental Coalition while on sabbatical in 2007.



Energy-Efficient Living, Part 1

By Linda Ochs, Development Associate

Imagine my excitement at finally purchasing the little homestead property I had always dreamed about! Seven acres 1200' off the beaten track in Waterloo, NY. My original plan called for building a small, energy-efficient house and going with a conventional power system. I had a building party in 1986 and we built an 18' by 28' structure with 2x6 walls and lots of insulation (before it was the norm), using hand tools and a generator for the basic framing. I had figured out everything that would be needed; purchased, cut and labeled most of the lumber over the course of a year, so the structure went up fairly fast. When I got the estimate from NYS Electric & Gas for \$12,000 to put in the power lines, and the news I would



have to cut a 20' right-of-way of trees down for the wires, I quickly changed my mind about a conventional power system.

We lived like *Little House on the Prairie* with kerosene lamps and a cooler until I discovered solar power. I had done some reading about solar energy in *The Mother Earth News* and *Home Power Magazine*, met up with some people who were using it, and thought I'd start out slow and see how it went. After all, I still had the kerosene lamps to fall back on!

My small DC power system consisted of six, 48-watt Kyocera solar panels, 40-amp battery charger and a couple of forklift batteries. It gave me a new sense of independence as well as lights and a few other luxuries in life!

The beauty I have found about going solar is you can add onto your system when you want. You don't have to start out with a \$50,000 system. I've been learning along the way and have upgraded my system over the years.

Without this first step, however, I might not have taken the chance with solar and could have just remained literally in the dark or taken out a loan to pay for electric lines and have a monthly electric bill, adding to the world's energy problem. The option of becoming part of the world energy problem was not something I wanted to be part of. My son used to say that we "lived like modern pioneers." Solar was the answer to my power needs and I'm not being held hostage by the electric company!!! Modern pioneers, definitely has a nice ring to it!

What's even better these days is being tied to the grid if you already are and adding solar to your existing system. This way you have the best of both worlds and don't have to worry about long stretches of cloudy weather as you can fall back on grid power. Part 2 of this article will appear in the next newsletter. Stay tuned!

Running on Veggie Oil

By Sam Harrington, Albany Intern

I'm converting my 1984 Mercedes turbo-diesel station wagon to run on waste vegetable oil that most restaurants pay to have taken away. Sound crazy? It's not. A diesel engine converted to vegetable oil runs normally and gets great fuel economy.

How does it all work? The converted car starts just like normal with conventional diesel (or biodiesel). The hot radiator fluid is re-routed to flow through a series of coils all along the vegetable oil system. There are heating coils inside the vegetable oil fuel tank, the hoses are heated, and there is a heated filter. After transferring engine heat to the vegetable oil system, it goes back into the radiator. A temperature sensor inside the fuel tank lets the driver know when the vegetable oil has reached a high enough temperature. Once warmed up, the car can switch over from diesel to vegetable oil at the flick of a switch. One downside is that you have to remember to flip the switch a minute before turning the car off to flush all the vegetable oil out of the engine and fuel system.

Since I'm a poor college student studying mechanical engineering, I decided to build my own conversion kit from scratch. It's designed and built to fuel my Mercedes turbo-diesel station wagon. However, kits are available online, starting at about \$800, and you can hire professionals to install it if you aren't a gear head. I welded my veggie oil fuel tank out of a recycled steel drum, used hardware store odds and ends to build a heating system, and assorted car and truck fuel system parts to make it all work. When all is done, the conversion will have cost me less than \$400. At current fuel prices, the system will pay for itself in the first 5 year!

LEAN, MEAN AND FOCUSED: THE ATFF'S WORK IN ALBANY

By Steve Breyman, Executive Director

Last September, dozens of representatives from member-organizations around the state came to Albany for the Alliance's annual Strategic Retreat. Our job? To devise a public policy priority agenda for the 2007 Legislative Session. The outcome? A host of highly worthy proposed executive and legislative actions designed to move New York State closer to precautionary chemical policy and a sustainable economy. Given the years-long lack of leadership on this score from Washington, DC, it's fallen to us in the states to move ahead with our agendas for protection of human and ecosystem health, clean production, and green economic development. These matters are simply too important to entrust to a federal government that denies the reality of climate change, wages endless wars, and cuts the taxes of billionaires.

The promise of a greener gubernatorial administration come 2007 revved us up after twelve or more years of lackluster and restricted environmental policy in Albany. CEC, led by Mark Dunlea, Anne Rabe, and Barbara Warren, and with a host of Alliance partners, furiously researched, wrote, and delivered draft executive orders to Governor-elect Spitzer's transition team in record time. And this despite the departure of both CEC's Executive Director and Associate Director (see story on p. 3).

The Governor chose to limit his executive orders thus far to good government reforms long overdue in the state's capital. But he made room in his 2007-08 Executive Budget proposal for the Alliance's proposed Pollution Prevention Institute (PPI). Modeled on the Massachusetts Toxic Use Reduction Institute, the PPI would have three main features: research and development, information clearing house, and site for pollution prevention planner training and certification (see story on page 1). From its laboratories, we expect the next generation of inherently safer technologies and substitutes for toxic chemicals will emerge. For example, we can hardly wait until innovative start-ups and green entrepreneurs are fashioning new materials and composites from agricultural sources—like

corn—rather than from imported oil and natural gas. From its classrooms, we anticipate hundreds of new pollution prevention planners will emerge to fan out across the state aiding enterprises both large and small to reengineer their processes, reduce energy use, and green their product lines.

The idea underlying the PPI is to prepare New York manufacturers to compete in a marketplace characterized by growing international regulation of hazardous substances and problematic chemicals. While the US government dithers, the European Union, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and China move ahead with state-of-the-art regulatory regimes (ROHS, WEEE, REACH, etc.) that restrict hazardous materials use in products. Without cleaning up their production acts soon, without being able to demonstrate within a few years product safety in advance, US firms will find themselves without buyers for their goods in the largest and most lucrative global markets.

This is the last thing the hard hit manufacturing sector of the NYS economy needs, especially Upstate. And, for us at CEC, this goes to show yet again: there is NO conflict at present between creating high-skill, well-paying jobs, and improving the environmental performance of our schools, homes, workplaces, and governments. The two go hand in hand.

To learn more about or to have your organization join the Alliance for a Toxic Free Future, visit www.toxicfreefuture.org, or contact Steve Breyman, (518) 462-5527, x14, breyms@rpi.edu.

Your Work Environment

By Laura McCarthy, Program Associate

Did you know that indoor air quality is among EPA's top five pollution priorities and that indoor air is often 25 times more contaminated than outdoor air for certain pollutants? Given that the average person spends an estimated 90% of her time indoors, these numbers are a huge concern. In addition, asthma rates have been increasing, made worse by pollution both indoors and out. Working all day in an office, what can you do to stay happier and healthier?

Get Fresh Air! Start by getting more outside time. For most people, fresh air time involves the walk from the front door to the car, and again from the car to the office. I've found that taking the brisk 30 minute walk to work not only saves me the gas and frustration from driving around looking for parking, but I'm more alert and less fidgety throughout the entire day. Most people can't walk to their jobs, but they can stop roaming for as-close-as-possible-parking! Get out of the car sooner and have a nice stroll – then try to leave the desk for lunch and get outside again.

Cut down on the smelly stuff. Work to ensure the air you and your co-workers breathe at work is as safe as it can be. Purchase non-toxic correction fluid, and cut down on using permanent markers (like Sharpies) when they aren't necessary. Crayola washable markers work just as well for labels and large paper charts created during brainstorming meetings. Also, don't wear strong perfumes and hairsprays which can give you or your office neighbors a headache! Smelly markers and adhesives often contain chemicals referred to as asthmagens, meaning they lead to asthma. Multiple chemical sensitivity disorder is a condition some people can develop if they're overexposed to a chemical, like a pesticide, making them overly sensitive to other chemicals, even in very small amounts. There is little or no research on the health effects of the combinations of toxic chemicals we're exposed to on a daily basis, so the safest bet is to reduce exposure wherever possible.

Clean Green. State of New York Executive Order 134 mandates that state agencies purchase cleaning products which minimize the impact on human health and the environment. In addition, a green cleaning in schools executive order was made effective in August of 2006. Many workplaces are making a conscious effort to go green - cutting down on employee exposures to toxic chemicals that have been linked to asthma, dizziness and other office ailments.. There are plenty of cost-competitive alternatives, so why shouldn't your workplace

use them too? For more information, check out INFORM at www.informinc.org. They've created great fact sheets for green purchasing, as well as a report called *Cleaning for Health* which can be downloaded from the website.

Get Proper Ventilation and Humidity. Along with indoor air pollution, many people in offices suffer because the air is too dry. Dry air means that lung irritants like ozone from office equipment and carbon particles from fax machines, copiers and printers are even more problematic. Iron and silica, both present in toner dust, have been found in the lungs of workers with severe coughs. In summer, open windows. A small desktop humidifier or combined ionizer and carbon filter would also help. If this isn't possible, a damp towel near a heater may do the trick. If there is construction going on in your building, it is even more important that indoor air quality is managed correctly. Talk with your building maintenance staff if you're concerned.

Decorate with Plants. Create a microclimate of green plants around your workspace. Green leafy plants like spider plants, ivy, bamboos, palms, and ferns remove toxic chemicals from the air, including benzene, formaldehyde, and fumes from cleaning products. Plants improve the dry dusty atmosphere resulting from electronic equipment. In addition to providing healthier air, plants liven up workspaces; reduce stress; and increase creativity and productivity!

Change can be a Good Thing. Getting new furniture? Moving offices? This could be a great opportunity to make safer choices to ensure your office space doesn't off-gas harmful chemicals. When CEC moved this past fall, we were able to ask that the new space be painted with no-VOC paint (available at Sherwin Williams), and carpeted with PVC-free carpeting (from greenfloors.com). Choices like these, as well as cutting down on furniture made from particle board (a major source of formaldehyde used as an adhesive) can reduce indoor air quality problems. We also chose to use the PVC-free carpet as molding rather than choose PVC strips to line the walls against the floor. While most people don't have the opportunity to "green" their workplace, talking with the super or with building maintenance about such possibilities can never hurt!

Don't forget that ensuring that your office environment is as safe and toxic-free as it can be is only one part of living healthier. Do what you can to stay healthy by eliminating toxic chemicals at home, exercising, eating right, sleeping enough, and laughing with friends.

Buffalo PBT-Free Campaign

By Caitlin Littlefield, Buffalo Environmental Associate

We've all heard the scary reports before—deadly laundry detergent, offgassing plastics, carcinogens in plywood—the list goes on. The facts, however, are proving these grim claims are true.

PBTs, or persistent bioaccumulative toxic chemicals, are everywhere in our daily lives and they can wreak havoc on our bodies. These chemicals are hidden in the seemingly innocuous products that we use everyday—batteries, nail polish, fabrics, and even children's toys. With their disposal, these products breakdown and release their chemical components. Once PBTs enter the environment, they begin their journey up the food chain and into our bodies. Developed for their stability, their persistence ensures their lasting effect on human health. Additionally, instead of passing through the body like other harmful substances, PBTs are readily stored in fat tissues where they accumulate and become more concentrated.

The various lake systems in New York are particularly vulnerable to contamination. The extraordinary size of the Great Lakes Basin allows more pollutants to enter the water, and a popular sport fishing industry delivers the accumulated toxins to the dinner table. The Hudson River Valley is equally as vulnerable, especially with current acid rain issues and long history of toxic pollution. The EPA has identified PBTs as priority chemicals for reduction, and has over 100 fish advisories for New York State because of PBT contamination. PBTs are especially dangerous to children whose lower body weight results in a higher body burden. The toxins can also be passed to babies through the womb or breast milk. Mercury and lead are two PBTs with well-documented adverse effects on the nervous and reproductive systems. Other PBTs have been identified as carcinogens, neurotoxins, chronic or acute toxins and respiratory irritants.

Keeping PBTs out of the waste stream is the surest method for keeping them out of our bodies. A few cities across New York already have legislation in place that limits or bans purchasing products that release PBTs during their manufacture, use, or disposal. PBT elimination or reduction laws, policies and/or initiatives exist in the cities of Buffalo, New York City, Hudson, Boston, Seattle, San Francisco and Oakland, as well as the states of Washington, Oregon, Maine, and New Hampshire. Citizens' Environmental Coalition is currently working to pass PBT-free procurement policies in Rochester, Syracuse and Albany.

Any action that we can take today to better our tomorrow is a worthy action. For more information, or to show your

support for PBT legislation, contact Caitlin Littlefield at Citizens' Environmental Coalition at 716-885-6848 or by email at ceccaitlin@gmail.com.

West Valley Update

By Dan Galvin, Environmental Associate

It is shaping up to be a crucial year for the effort to clean up the West Valley nuclear waste site. The *Radioactive Waste Cleanup Campaign*—a collaborative between CEC, the Coalition on West Valley Nuclear Waste (CWVNW), Nuclear Information and Research Service (NIRS), and the Center for Health, Environment and Justice (CHEJ)—will use the results of our Full-Cost Accounting (FCA) study to build strong public and political support for a safe cleanup method involving the exhumation and above ground storage of the waste.

The release of the long-awaited Department of Energy draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), originally slated for early 2007, has been pushed back until later this year. The Radioactive Waste Campaign, however, has recently been granted access to the draft EIS under the Freedom of Information Law. At the same time, our consultants are preparing the FCA study, a precautionary economic approach that comprehensively assesses all the costs of different cleanup options. This is a key part of our strategic campaign for a safe, permanent cleanup at West Valley, as the FCA study will provide critically important economic and environmental information on the various remedial options.

Armed with a comprehensive independent assessment of the site cleanup options, and presented with the opportunity to comment on the Department of Energy's upcoming draft EIS, the campaign sees this as a perfect time to activate the public. To that end, we have reinvigorated the West Valley Action Network—a coalition of organizations in support of a responsible and safe cleanup of the West Valley site—and expanded our media outreach efforts. It is crucial to have such a broad support-base as we approach the decision-making period for the final cleanup of the West Valley site.

CEC Leads the Way Towards a Sustainable New York State With Healthy Environment Healthy Economy Symposium

By Matthew Shapiro, Development Coordinator

CEC hosted **Healthy Environment, Healthy Economy-A Symposium on Building a Safe and Sustainable Future for New York State** on December 6-7, 2006. The event assembled over 350 national and state leaders from business, government, labor, non-profit organizations and academic institutions in the heart of New York State government, the Legislative Office Building, to demonstrate that the infrastructure is in place to put New York on the forefront of ecologically sustainable economic development.

CEC looks to use the momentum generated by the symposium to advocate for the enactment of an Executive Order that was proposed to Governor Spitzer by CEC and our Alliance for a Toxic-Free Future partners that would require state agencies to avoid purchasing products and services containing or using priority toxic chemicals, whenever safer alternatives are available and not cost prohibitive. This includes specifications for green buildings, Energy Star efficiency, recycled paper content and waste reduction.

The event's success further confirms our belief that the concerns of environmental advocates and business leaders do not have to be independent of each other and that 'green businesses' will be an important engine driving the economy of tomorrow. "Our main goal," Executive Director Steve Breyman told the Albany Times Union; "is to explode the myth that creating jobs or economic growth are in conflict with environmental protection."

Testaments to this were the many companies with exposition tables to present that you can run a flourishing business while remaining environmentally responsible. The expo area showcased some of the wide gamut of goods and services that are currently available and contributing to sustainability. Among those displayed included non-toxic cleaning products and janitorial services, green roofing, natural insulations, solar and wind powered energy systems, safe pest-control and lawn care products, healthy diapers, management tools for the control of storm water runoff, products that create a safe indoor environment, and environmentally safe office furniture and

supplies. To learn more about the companies that participated in Healthy Environment, Healthy Economy please turn to page 12 for descriptions and contact info.

The symposium's focus was divided into three tracks; green energy; healthy buildings and development; and green design, chemistry, production and manufacturing. The event opened with a plenary session entitled "The Next Ten Years: Opportunities and Challenges," which featured experts from each track and was moderated by former NYS Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Erin Crotty.

Following the plenary session and a quick refreshment break the participants moved on to Healthy Environment, Healthy Economy's center piece, the sixteen interactive panel discussions. The panels were designed to thoroughly explore strategies addressing the opportunities and challenges of sub issues within each track. What made the discussions so unique is that unlike many workshop settings where speakers lecture to a passive audience, these discussions were set up to fully incorporate the audience along with the panelists.

In the first half of the program the panelist each spoke to these issues. The second half was audience driven with participants not only asking questions, but also detailing how their company or organization is handling these issues. This created a think tank like atmosphere allowing participants to share their own examples of how they dealt with a particular issue or what they were doing to progress sustainability. This format also created a different type of networking opportunity, with participants asking questions and addressing each other along with the panelists. This is exciting because in order to advance our shared goal of a sustainable New York, a large network of ideas and resources must be in place and this format allowed the necessary connections to be made to lay such a foundation.

continued on next page

Healthy Environment Healthy Economy continued

Topics for the discussions included: “There’s No Place Like Home: Greening Our Communities;” “Here Comes the Sun: Trends in Green Energy Generation;” and “To Market, To Market: Strategies for Green Products.” Panelists included renowned organic architect Eric Corey Freed, Kit Kennedy from the Natural Resource Defense



Steve Breyman, far left, heads the final Plenary Session Committee

Council, New York House Magazine Editor, Jim Andrews, Alicia Culver, Executive Director of the Green Purchasing Institute, Professor Nabil Nasr, Director, Center for Integrated Manufacturing, Director of State Sustainability for Massachusetts Eric Freedman and Roger Slotkin, CEO of Odyne Corporation.

After the morning sessions, lunch was served in the Legislative Office Building’s well area. During lunch the keynote address was delivered by Roger Saillant, President and CEO of Plug Power. Saillant is a dedicated



CEC’s Matthew Shapiro and Kailey Cartwright

environmentalist (who has a PhD in chemistry) and has run the 300 person company- that manufactures fuel cells that power cell phone towers- since December 2000. While he discussed the business community’s responsibility in forging a sustainable future throughout the speech, he also noted the responsibility is not business’s alone and that the general population needs to become more efficient in our energy consumption.



Paul Bray, on right, moderates a panel of experts

Before becoming head of Plug Power, Saillant spent more than 30 years with Ford Motor Company-most recently serving as Vice President and General Manager of their Energy Transformation System Group-and he discussed limiting the over reliance on automobiles as one way the population can contribute to sustainability. He cited how cars emit over 20 pounds of green house gasses for every gallon of gasoline burned.

The second day featured a final round of panel discussions and a final plenary moderated by Steve Breyman entitled “The Next Ten Years: Strategies for Building a Safe and Sustainable Future in New York State.” On this plenary, representatives from construction sector business, energy sector business, production sector business, environmental and public health organizations, community/ environmental justice organizations, state government and



From Left to Right, Pam Hadad-Hurst, Conference Organizer, Jodi Smits Anderson, Architect and LEED AP for Collins + Scoville, Architects, PC, Jeff Sama, Chair, NYS Pollution Prevention and Compliance Council, DEC, and Beth Meer, Senior Policy Analyst, Office of Assemblyman Thomas DiNapoli

academia all provided at least one breakthrough idea, commitment or opportunity that they, their organization, or sector can or should bring about to help business more rapidly grow a green economy for energy, manufacturing, commerce and construction in New York State. During lunch on the second day the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation presented their annual Environmental Excellence Awards.

CEC would like to thank our underwriters without whom this would have been impossible: Collins and Scoville Architects, P.C., Davies Office Refurbishing, Inc, House Magazine and Schein Media, New York Power Authority, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority.

CEC was enthused to end 2006 on such a high note. It was exciting to bring such a diverse group of voices together for this important goal. Healthy Environment, Healthy Economy allowed CEC to lay the foundation for a strong network, but this is just the first step. In the coming year we will continue to build on this base. We look forward to strengthening the new relationships we formed with the symposium, and to hold a similar event this year. We plan to keep the event's website www.hehe-ny.org active and transform it into a viable resource of information on sustainability. For more information about the symposium or to contribute to the Healthy Environment, Healthy Economy campaign please call Matthew Shapiro at 518-462-5527.

New York Power Authority

New York Power Authority is a non-profit, public-benefit energy corporation that does not use any tax revenue or state credit. We finance construction of our projects through bond sales to private investors, repaying bondholders with proceeds from our operations.

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Notes From The Field

People's State of the State

CEC participated in the annual People's State of the State held outside the Capitol on January 2, 2007. Mark Dunlea, Associate Director for the Hunter Action Network of New York State and CEC board member, organized the event calling for investments in anti-poverty, healthcare and food programs. CEC staff persons Matthew Shapiro and Trix Niernberger attended and appeared in several media reports.

CEC & PUSH Demonstrate in Buffalo

On December 8, 2006, members of People United for Sustainable Housing (PUSH), along with members of CEC, dressed in Santa hats, filled the halls outside Mayor Brown and Governor Pataki's offices.

PUSH is a community group that has been fighting the state Municipal Bond Bank Authority's lien on 1,449 houses throughout the city of Buffalo. The MBBA purchased the liens from the city in 2003 with a promise to maintain the homes and turn them over to responsible owners. The agency has since done nothing with the properties, allowing them to lay abandoned and lend to severe social problems in the neighborhoods.

The large group of activists from PUSH and CEC sang songs about facilitating change and bringing hope to Buffalo's neediest neighborhoods. The songs used original lyrics sung to the tune of holiday classics like Jingle Bells: "...Byron Brown, ask them why, Buffalo sits and rots When they could make it go away with all the cash they've got..."

The songs addressed the importance of the MBBA issue and Pataki's failure to address it. One song was also targeted at Mayor Brown, who PUSH hopes will begin to take a more proactive position on the matter and hold MBBA accountable for the conditions of the properties. PUSH has developed an eight-point platform on how to fix the problem, generated by people living in the affected neighborhoods. They delivered that platform to Mayor Brown's office during the caroling along with presenting Governor Pataki's Buffalo office with a stocking full of coal.

For more information on PUSH, check out their website at www.pushbuffalo.org

Kids Take Action On The Environment

At the Washington Avenue Albany Public Library on Dec 9, 2006, Capital Region children got a chance to show that they care about the environment. "Saving Home: Kids Take Action for the Environment" was sponsored by the library and the Honest Weight Food



CEC's table at the Albany Public Library Childrens environmanetal event, girls from Lisha Kill school signed and decorated letters to the DEC asking for stonger regulations for factory farms.

Co-op, and featured a book reading and signing by author Lee Welles who wrote "Gaia Girls Enter the Earth." The childrens' story features a girl whose family's upstate New York organic farm is threatened by a factory farm, and is the first in a new series about kids and environmental issues.

CEC's Laura McCarthy set up a display about factory farms at the event, and educated children about them through craft projects and a letter to the DEC in favor of stronger regulations for factory farms. By the end of the day, over 20 children chose to send picture-covered letters to the DEC asking that factory farms be made accountable for the waste they produce.

For more about factory farms, also called CAFOs (concentrated animal feeding operations), the report "the Wasting of Rural New York State" can be downloaded from CEC's website www.cectoxic.org. Other organizations taking part the kids day of action included Capital District Community Gardens, George Landis Arboretum, Albany Pine Bush Preserve Commission, the Nature Conservancy, and YO! Youth Organics, among others.

CEC Board Members Join CSEA in Picketing

On Tuesday, January 9, 2007, Board members Candace Lider and Kelly Travers-Main and son, Daniel Main, marched in a picket line in front of the Rensselaer County office in Troy, in solidarity with Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA). CSEA recently joined the Alliance for a Toxic Free Future. They marched with the 40 employees of the CSEA Rensselaer County 911 Unit

members who have been without a Union Contract for three years. Board Candace is also the secretary for Troy's Labor Council and Kelly is the co-founder of United Neighbors Concerned About General Electric & Dewey Loeffel Landfill (UNCAGED) in the town of Nassau, Rensselaer County.



Update: Workers win Contract

After three years of negotiation and protest, the Civil Service Employees Union reached a contract agreement with Rensselaer County. Union leaders are hailing the agreement as a good victory for the workers. Now the union members must vote to approve the contract.

Sustainable Design in Austin, Texas

While on vacation in Austin, Texas, Laura McCarthy got a chance to check out the Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center – a great example of sustainable design as well as a place to enjoy nature and learn about the importance of gardening with native plants. The center's unique construction includes a rooftop rainwater harvesting system, aqueduct, and an observation tower that doubles as a cistern for storing the water which is used to sustain the gardens. In the background of the photo, you can see the trough which directs water into the cistern tower Laura is standing on. Rainwater collection systems are also a great way for homeowners to cut down on using drinkable water for landscaping. Landscaping with native plants to avoid using water and chemical inputs in arid climates is also known as “xeriscaping”.



Points of Interest

Green Building Guide: Take Two

In 2004, CEC released “Building Green without going in the Red” - a 30 page introduction to safer, alternative building supplies for people who build, might build, or might be thinking about building. Whether it was an apartment dweller looking for new paint, a homeowner starting an addition, or a landowner with big dreams, this guide was a great start to the building process. Now we're hard at work on the updated and expanded edition which will include more on alternative home construction techniques; a section on conquering toxic problems in old homes, such as mold, lead, and asbestos; and revised sections on all the building steps from the foundation to the fixtures!

The new, expanded guide will be available online in the spring. Until then, we'd like to hear green building tips from you, our members! Have you recently made an effort to go green while building or landscaping? Have you discovered a great source for materials or a non-toxic alternative building material that others could use? Share your green building tips! Send an email to Laura McCarthy ceclaura@igc.org and tell us about it. We'll be publishing the best tips in either our spring newsletter, or as a separate section of the updated “Building Green” guide.

Children's Jewelry Recall

On March 15th, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission announced a voluntary recall of about 58,000 children's necklaces sold nationwide in Claire's Boutiques Inc. retail stores. The necklaces, which sold for between \$5 and \$11 throughout 2006, were found to have high levels of lead.

If you have bought a necklace at this store or know children who shop at Claire's, go to CPSC's web site to see this recall, including pictures of the recalled products: <http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/prerel/prhtml07/07128.html>. Those who have bought this jewelry can return it to any Claire's store for a full refund or a free replacement product.

On a positive note, many major retailers of children's jewelry, including Target, Kmart, Macy's, Claires, Sears, Toys R Us, Disney and dozens of other companies have agreed to eliminate lead exposure risks from jewelry marketed to children and adults. For more on the campaign to eliminate this hazard, see the Center for Environmental Health's website: <http://www.cehca.org>



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